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週訊

The End Times – Already But Not Yet 末世 - 已經尚未

Year 4 Susith

No one appears to have been able to escape the recent virus epidemic causing havoc all over the world with far reaching impact on the livelihood of the people, with its ripple effects seems a new world order is glooming. While there are many Christians have been predicting the end of the world, what a good time to look into the scripture to find out what it says on the “end times”. Mt 24:36 gives clearest indication that no one knows the day and the hour, except the Father, probably which is why some are trying to predict the year, but for Catholics it is not for us to speculate.

General judgement is associated with the second coming of Jesus with Glory, and the scripture shed light by providing us with insights on how to grasp this mystery and manoeuvre the end times. Let’s glance through scripture to get overall understanding how the end times will be.

Mt 12:36 => remember, people have to render an account for every careless word uttered. James 3:8 explains this perfectly that no man can tame the tongue, unless seek grace of God to curb the tongue.

Mt 24 => coming of false Messiahs, false prophets deceiving many, wars between nations, famines and earthquakes, persecution of faithful, many be fallen to sin while love dried down, betrayal and

hatred among people, spread of the good news to the ends of the earth. There is nothing new about these signs as we have been witnessing them for many years already as well at present.

Rom 11:25-26 => Conversion of Jews to take place before the end of the world.

Lk 21:25-27 and Mt 24:30 => great tribulation with coming of the Son of Man in Glory to save the righteous in a rapture who persevere. Acts 1:11 confirms this that Jesus will return, same way as of his ascension into heaven. 1 Thes 4:15-17 gives details of the second coming of the Lord or “Parousia” leading to a rapture, that Lord himself will come down from heaven to raise up the dead first, and then to who are left will be caught up together, and will meet the Lord in the air.

2 Thes 2:3 => St Paul warns not get deceived by antichrist and fallen into apostasy.

Rev 17:9-11=> with many symbolisms and apocalyptic language in the wording explains the “beast” which is anti-Christ. Seems we are at this stage now, matches the present world situation well. Antichrist also mentioned in 2 Jn 7 as deceivers who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ.

P.T.O.

CCC 675 warns of antichrist to take place and Church will pass through final trial that will shake the faith of many believers, and lead to near extinction but only to be saved by the second coming of Jesus Christ.

2 Thes 2:8 => Finally victory is eminent by Lord Jesus Christ himself in destroying the antichrist with his breath of his mouth at the end of the world.

End time prophesies in Lk 12:40, 21:31 & 40, "when you see these things happening, know the kingdom of God is near", and to be prepared for that hour, same on Mt 24:33 Jesus on the Mount of Olives addressing the disciples "when you see these things, he is near".

With all the above at hand we faithful should not be frightened, despair and discouraged because the looming of end times to reign in and to conclude with a rapture, tribulation, antichrist, end of the world, heaven and hell. Most important concern should be, to take seriously on how well and righteously we live our earthly lives, as Jesus is not going to judge us whether we got the dates of end times right on when the Jesus' second coming is going to occur. See what Paul says in 1 Thes 5 as there is no escape on the final day of the Lord, as we are there now, stay in faith and love for the hope of salvation. Actually, it is the end of the world for many at this moment too, and they are being judged by God right now, so we shall be ready at any moment when God calls us, so to live every moment to the fullest without worry as today would be the last day. This is why the catholic church calls the end times is already there, but not yet fulfilled, until the coming of Jesus.

Even though we depend on the grace of God, we have also to render an account on the last day on what we have done. Because, Love of God is over-

pouring (1 Tim 2:4) God will to save everyone. Turn to me (Isa 45:23) and all you ends of the earth and be saved.

Below warnings to be given serious thought:

Mt 19:23-24 => easier for a camel to enter through eye of a needle, hard for rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 7:13 => enter through the narrow gate.

Mt 25:31-34 => separation of sheep vs goats at the final judgement.

Remember in this earthly life we will not take with us what we have received, but only what we have given to others, either be good or bad. Reminding us the parable of rich fool who dreamt for long life after storing his wealth (Lk 12:16-20) ended up losing his life very moment. There is a saying "Live has no meaning without sharing", since we are born with nothing and leave with nothing. Everything we need have been given to us by Heavenly Father, and we shall use our given freedom consciously on how to use them righteously. To grasp the true in-depth meaning of life is coming to understand that, first and utmost is to seek the kingdom of heaven in everything we do, and other things will be given to us besides (Luke 12:31).

Ultimate goal in this mission on earth for us is to save our souls and help others to save their souls.